

BRIEF

Pacific contemporary art commission

Commission of a contemporary art installation for the ‘Pacific Encounters’ gallery, part of a new gallery development at the National Maritime Museum in London. We seek to commission a contemporary artist to create a new work to address Pacific encounters through the thematic areas of art and culture, leisure and tourism, environment and political history from a distinctly contemporary and artistic perspective.

Commission period: March 2017 to March 2018

<p>Endeavour galleries project vision:</p>	<p>Voyages of exploration – historical, cultural and personal – lie at the heart of the National Maritime Museum (NMM)’s four new <i>Endeavour galleries</i>: <i>Tudor and Stuart Seafarers</i>; <i>Pacific Encounters</i>; <i>Polar Worlds</i> and <i>Sea Things</i>. In different ways, they examine how men and women ventured beyond Britain’s shores to explore the ends of the Earth in a quest for knowledge, riches and adventure from the late fifteenth century onwards. Visitors will meet the remarkable people who embarked on a series of extraordinary voyages. They will discover how the people and cultures encountered in the past were irrevocably changed by this contact. They will also find out how Britain was, and continues to be, transformed by these exchanges.</p> <p>By working with communities to unlock the full potential of the Museum’s rich collections, the galleries will inspire and challenge new generations to set sail on their own voyages of imagination, discovery and understanding. These individual and collective journeys not only highlight invisible histories, but also demonstrate contemporary relevance. They will create a sea-change for the NMM, engaging, empowering and inspiring its diverse audiences.</p>
<p>Brief description of the Endeavour galleries project:</p>	<p>The overarching aim for the <i>Endeavour galleries project</i> is to increase audience access to the NMM’s collections, physically and intellectually.</p> <p>The project takes forward a new approach to working with audiences, this includes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Four strands of activity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Removing barriers to make our museum more accessible</i> <i>Creating community ownership</i> <i>Representing invisible histories</i> <i>Collaborating to create a social and inspiring space</i> ➤ Four new permanent galleries about global maritime exploration and encounters, expanding the museum’s public space by 40% <p>The Pacific contemporary art commission sits within the <i>Collaborating to create a social and inspiring space</i> strand of activity, and relates to the ‘Pacific Encounters’ gallery.</p>



Supported by
The National Lottery[®]
 through the Heritage Lottery Fund



<p>Brief description of the Pacific Encounters gallery context:</p>	<p>The Pacific Encounters gallery will draw on the museum’s world-class collections associated with British exploration of the Pacific, especially those related to James Cook and the London Missionary Society, to tell a multi-perspective story of encounters in the Pacific from the seventeenth century to the present day. The complex encounters between Britons and Pacific peoples will be looked at through a series of themes attached to different British voyages: science and observing, art and encounter, death and legacy, collecting and exchange, breadfruit and bounty, faith and mission, pictures of empire. Each will present a series of ‘characters’ associated with each story that bring different perspectives to bear on these complex histories.</p> <p>The gallery has entrances at each end, which both introduce a sense of Pacific space and identity from either the seventeenth or twenty-first centuries. A historic bookcase at each end maintains a sense of the room’s history as the old museum library. In the twenty-first century section, entitled ‘Pacific Now’ we are seeking to commission an artist to produce a large piece for the bookcase in response to the themes of the gallery.</p>
<p>The opportunity:</p>	<p>The commission will open the opportunity for an artist to showcase their work in a national museum. It will allow sensitivities around the history of European exploration of the Pacific to be tackled by a contemporary voice within the museum, and to give audiences a sense of a history told through multiple perspectives, generating an emotive response. The artist will have access to the museum collections and expertise, in collaboration with the gallery team.</p> <p>This section of the gallery is intended particularly to give voice to inhabitants of the Pacific today, to give visitors a sense of a vibrant, thriving and global community with rich connections to the past. This should be a fundamental part of the artwork. The artist is invited to respond to one or more of the four themes which will be dealt with on the neighbouring screens: art and culture; leisure and tourism; environment; political history. They are encouraged to consider working in participation with communities in Britain, both those whose cultural identities are connected with Pacific history and with audiences to consider how they will relate to the final piece.</p> <p>The commission is being overseen by an advisory panel of specialists in contemporary and Pacific art.</p> <p>Outcomes for the artist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of artistic practice. - Experience of working with a large national institution with a range of audiences and Museum staff - Increased knowledge of the NMM collection and archive - Profile raising <p>Outcomes for people, communities, heritage and NMM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People will have learnt about heritage: Audiences will have learnt about multiple histories and themes in both Britain and the Pacific, which the artist practitioner is investigating. - Heritage will be better explained: Contemporary art will bring a fresh



Supported by
The National Lottery[®]
 through the Heritage Lottery Fund



	<p>perspective to bear on the museum collections. Audiences will have been able to ask questions to the practitioners and contribute to creative processes. Collection themes and histories will be interpreted in dialogue and made relevant to target audiences, with an emphasis on multiple perspectives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People will have developed skills: NMM staff will have developed new skills through working with the artist practitioner.
Scope and Exclusions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The gallery is planned as permanent, and therefore intended to last for 10-15 years. The artwork materials should be developed in consultation with the NMM gallery team with this lifespan in mind. - The piece is commissioned for display in the first instance. - The artwork would need to fit within, and visually fill, the physical constraints of the bookcases: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The bookcases are listed by Historic England as part of the fabric of the old museum library. Listed building consent has been approved for alterations to the bookcases, but Historic England may need to be consulted on the impact of the commissioned piece. o The bookcases span the wall on both sides of the door to the gallery. Each is made up of a series of 4 stacks as shown in Appendix 1. o Overall dimensions are approximately 2.5m wide x 2.2m high x 0.45m deep on each side. o The shelves can be adjusted or removed in line with the proposed artwork. o There is a fibre optic point on each side of the door allowing audio-visual options. o Collection items cannot be included in the bookcase display - The remainder of the 'Pacific Now' space of the gallery houses a full-size (8m-long, 6m-high) Fijian drua (canoe), and a display of screens showing representations of the modern Pacific within four themes. The artwork will need to work visually alongside these diverse elements. (See Appendix 2 for visuals of the gallery) - The artist is expected to participate in the delivery of additional online content associated with the gallery, such as writing regular blog posts or taking part in a filmed interview, to give a 'behind the scenes' story for online audiences.
Fees and budget:	<p>Total budget: £13,500, including fees and materials and any participatory work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - £4,500 to be paid on commencement of work - £5,000 to be paid in response to August 2017 update - £4,000 to be paid on final delivery of the artwork
Timings:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Artists are invited to submit expressions of interest by 15 January 2017 - A shortlist of artists will then be contacted to provide a more detailed artwork proposal by early March 2017. These would include a £500 fee. - Artist selected by end of March 2017 and artwork finalized in conversation with the museum.



Supported by
The National Lottery[®]
through the Heritage Lottery Fund



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Progress update and discussions in August 2017 - Delivery and installation in conjunction with RMG staff in March 2018 - Gallery to open May 2018
Expression of interest	<p>Please submit by 15 January 2017:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - concept design for the work - draft schedule and budget - CV - images of previous work - short document (maximum 2 sides of A4) outlining your interest in the project and stating what specific experience and expertise equip you to undertake this work.

Please contact the email below for relevant Appendices and to return finished proposals:
 Katy Barrett, Curator of Art
kbarrett@rmg.co.uk

A more detailed brief and Memorandum of Agreement will be finalized with the successful artist following their selection.